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Yosemite

Nature Notes

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YOSEMITE

NATURE NOTES

JUNE XXXVII - NUMBER 8

AUGUST 1958



—Josef Muench

Sunset over Sentinel Dome.



IN COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.



—Rowe, NI
Arthur E. Demaray

YOSEMITE

Nature Notes

in its 37th year of public service. The monthly publication of Yosemite's park naturalists and the Yosemite Natural History Association.

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XXXVII

AUGUST 1958

NO. 8

ARTHUR E. DEMARAY

1887 - 1958

The death of Arthur Demaray on August 19 took from the National Family another of the stalwarts fathered the Service. To me, he always been a principal guide mentor for Interpretation. Especially is he credited with leading park museum program out of the tangle of administrative entanglements which for a good many years obscured its identity and delayed development. Probably those others who in an earlier day were concerned with general park administration, finance, planning, development, protection, information, recreational resources and concessions equally convinced that he led the way for them, also. That type of man Arthur Demaray.

My earliest association with him in Yosemite in 1926. In the temporary absence of Superintendent Washington B. Lewis, Mr. Demaray, Administrative Officer in the Director's Office, served for a time as superintendent. I have pleasant

recollections of the discerning interest shown by him in the very young park naturalist program and the always-constructive supervision which he exercised. Perhaps the insight into the public response which he gained during those months in Yosemite enlivened his concern with the potentials of Service-wide interpretive work. At any rate, through all the years the interpreters and researchers in the Director's Office and in the field found in him a never-failing source of encouragement and guidance.

In the 1930s and early 1940s it was my good fortune to be rather closely associated with Mr. Demaray in Washington and to enjoy his generous personal friendship. He took me and my work "under his wing" in a very real sense, and I became well acquainted with his ability to carry problems of organization and staffing through the labyrinthine course set up by Budget, Civil Service, and Interior. The Museum Division came

into existence under his aegis, and he brought about administrative refinements in the broader set-up for Interpretation—refinements which facilitated the advance of all interpretive work and which today constitute a part of the foundations of the Naturalist-Historian unit of the service.

Arthur Demaray was a native Washingtonian. He was born there while his father, Edward A. Demaray, was secretary to a Minnesota senator. In 1903 when Arthur was 16 years old he took a job as messenger in the Geological Survey. During fourteen years of hard work, night school and individual study he made up for some of the formal schooling he had missed. He was still with the Geological Survey when he found a very charming helpmate, Alfrida Briggs, whom he married in 1913. In 1917 he transferred to the new-born bureau, the National Park Service, as a topographic draftsman. Successively he became editor, administrative assistant, executive officer, assistant director, associate director (for eighteen years), and director. He served on the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia, the Board of Trustees of the Welfare and Recreational Association, the National Arboretum Advisory Commission, the committee of officers of the Washington Monument Society and was the director of National Park Concessions, Inc. His numerous commendations and awards include the Cornelius Amory Pugsley Silver Medal, the decoration, Knight of Vasa, conferred by the King of Sweden, and the Distinguished Service Award of the Department of the Interior. In honoring him with the last-mentioned, on Nov. 8, 1951, Secretary Oscar L.

Chapman stated:

"Arthur E. Demaray . . . has had an outstanding part in developing the policies of the National Park Service. During many years he represented the Service effectively before the Bureau of the Budget and the Appropriations Committees of Congress. . . . He is praised for his effective encouragement of the program of historic sites—which sites now comprise a major part of the heritage of the Nation preserved in the National Park System. Mr. Demaray's keen judgment, fairmindedness, vision and unselfish devotion to his many tasks influenced countless actions taken by the National Park Service. He contributed helpful guidance to each new phase of its work. . . . Scores of employees have benefited from his counsel. He has displayed leadership, wisdom, and devotion to the public interest so distinguished as to earn the gratitude of the Nation and official recognition of the extraordinary quality of his service. . . . His is indeed a major contribution to the preserving of the National Park System and to the enlargement of its usefulness to the American people."

In the fall of 1951 Mr. Demaray retired after 48½ years of government service. He and Mrs. Demaray left their lovely Washington home in Rollingwood for a beautiful "Spanish estate" which they developed outside of Tucson, Arizona. Their daughter, Elise Anderson, had preceded them in taking up residence in Tucson. For seven years Arthur enjoyed the stimulating life in historic Spanish - American country and continued his work with National Parks Concessions, Inc. He too

work and produced a fine series of paintings, some of them featuring the local historic scene. During 1957 and 1958 he suffered great sickness. Death occurred on August 19 at the Tucson Medical Center Hospital. Mr. Demaray's remains were buried in Grand Canyon National Park on August 23. Mrs. Demaray and daughter, Elise, survived him.

I am sure that there is inscribed

upon the consciousness of each of Arthur's numerous friends a glowing record of his kindnesses and understanding. May there be a further lasting monument to him and his work! Reports from Washington indicate that study is being given to ways and means of commemorating the highly significant accomplishments attained by Arthur Demaray during his lifetime of service to National Parks.

—Carl Russell



—Anderson, NPS

Demaray and friends in the Mariposa Grove in 1950. From the left, Lawrence C. Merriam, then Superintendent at that time; Mr. Demaray; the late Major O. A. Tomlinson, at that time Director, Region 4; and Hillary A. Tolson, Assistant Director.

LITTLE NELLIE FALLS**By Shirley Sargent**

Little Nellie Falls is one of the prettiest, least-publicized and most picturesque waterfalls in the Yosemite region. Its very lack of prominence and out-of-the-way location, on the old Coulterville Road, endears it to those purposeful enough to know it. (The word "purposeful," to characterize admirers of the thirty-foot-drop falls, is correct. Very few travelers risk tires twice on the first nine miles of this dirt road. At many times of the year, "purposeful" may be considered synonymous with "foolhardy!"

Fed by Little Crane Creek, Little Nellie Falls splashes gracefully over granite in a shadowy canyon approximately midway between Big Meadow (Meyer's Ranch) and the Merced Grove of Big Trees. A jumble of fallen pines, alum root, azaleas, scarlet mimulus and shallow water cutting across the unbridged road add charm to the natural, unspoiled setting. The falls are situated just outside the western boundary of Yosemite National Park. There is a small, rude campsite just below the cascade in a fairly level area overlooking deep granite pools. Cold water only!

The famous and redoubtable Coulterville Road won the dramatic race to be the first stagecoach route into Yosemite Valley on June 17th, 1874, a dusty month ahead of its hated

rival, the Big Oak Flat Road. Dr. J. T. McLean, who built the winning road, had a high-spirited, popular daughter named Mary Ellen, who was known as "Nellie." Spying the joyous, wilderness fall on a survey trip in the early 1870's, McLean promptly called it after her. Later the site was used for a construction camp by McLean and his men. Nellie camped there often, both during and after the building of the road.

Now that Yosemite is reached by modern mountain highways — smooth, dust, rocks and ruts — the first part of the Coulterville Road is seldom seen by the casual tourist or known even to eager fishermen. A visit to this enchanting, peaceful place is well-worth the twelve mile round trip from the junction of the road with the All-Year Highway, just below Cascade Falls.

However, the Coulterville Road is **not** "another new freeway for safety." Best — dustiest too — months to travel it are July and August. Inquiries should **ALWAYS** be made at Park Headquarters in advance as to the condition of the road between Big Meadow and the falls itself. Many unwary souls have been stuck on this often-rutty stretch.

As Chief Itchyfoot, sage of the Sierras, says, "The road to Nellie is paved with good shovels."



Little Nellie Falls.

—Shirley Sargent

YOSEMITE WEATHER PICTURE FOR 1957-1958

By Jack Fry, Ranger-Naturalist

In 1957, well over one half of the visitors to Yosemite National Park came in June, July and August. Although many of these travelers return to the park during the winter months, many of them see the park only during the summer time. In order to answer some of the questions asked by the latter group of visitors regarding what Yosemite National Park is like during the winter months, the following information has been abstracted from the monthly reports of the Chief Park Ranger.

The data on temperatures are for Yosemite Valley only. The highest temperature recorded in the Valley was 97° in September, although the highest maximum average was 88.4°, recorded in July. The lowest temperature was 20°, recorded in January, and the lowest minimum average, 28°, was also recorded during the month of January.

Official winter temperatures are recorded at South Entrance, Yosemite Valley, and Badger Pass. The lowest temperature officially recorded in the park last year was at Badger Pass - - 1° on March 9, and the highest was 97°, recorded in Yosemite Valley during September. A minimum temperature thermometer, i.e., one which records increasingly lower temperatures until it is reset (much the same as a clin-

ical thermometer will record increasingly higher temperatures until reset) recorded 22° below zero at Tioga Pass Entrance Station winter. However, no one is static at Tioga Pass during the winter; the thermometer was set by the man to leave in the fall and when the station was opened in spring, thus, the date of this reading is not known and it is, therefore, not official.

The first rain of the year (July-June 1958) was on September 21 when .09 inches were recorded. The wettest month was March during which 10.21 inches of rain were recorded. February was next with 9.5 inches. During the entire year a total of 45.14 inches of precipitation were recorded, 10.14 inches greater than the normal rainfall (35 inches).

During the past year the snow pack was one of the heaviest on record. The time records have been since 1930. The first snows of the year were recorded on the Mariposa Grove and Glacier roads on the 20th and 21st of October. During November, 14 inches were recorded at Badger Pass, Yosemite's ski center. This had increased to 4 inches by the end of the month. On the 14th of November, the Tioga and Big Oak Flat roads were officially closed for the season. The snow in Yosemite Valley v-





—McIntyre, NPS

Although the Snow-Cat has made traveling easier, skis are carried, just in case!

—Anderson, NPS





—McInt

A hollow aluminum rod, pushed through the snow to the earth below, is weighed to determine the water content of the snow brought up in it. Park Rangers Ken Ashley and Fred Martin at work.

November 5th when "traces" of snow were recorded. Traces were also recorded on the 16th of that month.

On December 18, 4 inches of snow fell in Yosemite Valley, thus insuring residents and visitors of a white Christmas. Snow records for Badger Pass show 3 inches on December 1, 23 inches on the 22nd, and 18 inches on the 31st.

In January there were 4 inches of snow in Yosemite Valley, and by the 26th the depth of the snowpack at Badger Pass had increased to 51 inches. February also found 4 inches in the Valley and an increase to 81.5 inches at Badger Pass.

In March the results of the annual snow survey gave the following picture:

| Snow Course | Elev. | Depth ('57-'58) |
|----------------|-------|-----------------|
| Ostrander Lake | 8,600 | 127. |
| Gin Flat | 7,150 | 166. |
| Snow Flat | 8,700 | 146. |
| Tuolumne Mead. | 8,555 | 83. |

On April 6 the snowpack at Badger Pass increased in depth from 127 inches to 172 inches, but it had decreased to 102 inches by the 17th. During the month of April, conditions were such that the roads were officially opened. The Big Oak Flat road was opened on the 17th, the entire Mariposa road on the 19th, and the entire Point road on the 30th. Not until the 22nd of June could the Tioga Road be officially opened. At that time most of the country above Merced Lake and Tuolumne Meadows was still covered with 3 to 4 feet of snow.

A RARE FERN IN YOSEMITE

By Robert J. Rodin

ently on a field trip in the
y of Arch Rock the author
upon a fern not previously re-
from Yosemite, and usually
at lower foothil elevations.
Pityrogramma triangularis variety *pallida*
mes placed in the genus
Pityrogramma is a rare fern. It is a
of the common gold fern,
Pityrogramma triangularis, so named
e of an exudation of golden
material on the under side of
nds before the black spores
The rare variety *pallida* gets its
name because of its color
pallid or white wax covers
upper and lower surfaces of the
and also the stalk. Since it

has been given no common name
in the literature this author will refer
to it as the White Fern.

In shape and size it appears near-
ly identical to the gold fern, as can
be noted in the accompanying illus-
tration, but this variety is noticeably
lighter green and a more delicate
fern. It grows only in very protected
places, and the new location is in
cave-like shade beneath great gran-
ite boulders where it remains cool
even on a very hot day. When sum-
mer dryness finally cause the ferns
to die back, the whitish powder still
remains on the dry stems and curled
leaves.



The White Fern, *Pityrogramma triangularis* variety *pallida*, found growing near Arch Rock Ranger Station in protected shady places. Lower photograph shows lower sides of two varieties, left the White Fern, variety *pallida*, and right the Gold Fern, *Pityrogramma triangularis*.

—Rodin





—Anderson, NPS

The Grizzly Giant in the Mariposa Grove has a dead top.

SEQUOIA TOPS

By Glenn B. Coy, Ranger-Naturalist

of the questions frequently asked by ranger-naturalists in the sequoia groves is, "Ranger, if the top tree had not been knocked out by lightning, how tall would it be?" The answer is that with but a few exceptions the sequoias would not be very taller than they are at present. There are many limiting factors in the height of any forest tree. A tree of a given size of the sequoia presents many difficulties. One of the mysteries of plant physiology is the manner in which the uplift of water and minerals to such an altitude can be accomplished. Suggestions such as transpiration and capillarity leave many important questions unanswered.

Most of our western conifers tend to have a pointed top when young. If the top is destroyed, a branch in the next whorl usually bends upward to take its place. This pointer may persist as long as the tree has sufficient vigor and is growing.

As maturity approaches, the tree loses its point and a rounded, more rounded shape begins to appear.

At the time when the tree is selected by lumbermen for cutting, during this period they become more and more subject to plant diseases and insect attack. Old age is characterized by the barren, or dead tops and many dead and dying branches. The ages for each depend upon the species of tree and environmental factors.

Most giant sequoias are not killed by many of the old age diseases which beset other trees. They, however, go through the



—Anderson, NPS

Closeup of top of Grizzly Giant.

same growth stages. There are few trees which have the same sharp pointed, feathery symmetry of the young trees. As they reach advanced years, they have little that distinguishes them from other forest trees. It is only in maturity that they take on those characteristics of exceptional diameter and height which make them wonders of the world.

Although we know of no natural reason, with the exception of fire, for the death of the standing sequoias, there are several reasons for dead tops. The one most frequently

mentioned is lightning. This might be given more credence if some of the affected trees were not in protected locations. A more credible cause is the gradual dying away of the top due to root damage or lack of water. One cause of this condition could be the gradual drying of the whole southern Sierra which makes the supplying of water to such a great height very difficult. Trees have been observed to die back progressively from the tops after suffering continued fire damage to their trunks. Factors such as road building, with the cutting of roots, and human erosion undoubtedly play an important role with some trees, also.

The sequoias, in all probability, reach their maximum height at between 1500 and 2000 years. After this age they might be said to be mature trees. Those which are 3000 to 3800 years may be in late maturity or old age. Of this last we cannot speak definitely, though, since with their relative security from insect attack and plant disease there seems to be no reason except fire for their death. Any tree will increase in girth as long as it lives so our big trees cannot be said to continue the taper of a thirty foot tree on up to a point. Rather they have long ago reached a maximum height and like many a mature human have been increasing in girth ever since.



—An
The top of the American Legion
dead.



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—Anderson, NPS

Western Rattlesnake

